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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

ANIKI OKJE ERDMANN-BROWNING
and JACQUELINE BENITEZ, individually
and on behalf of all others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

THOMAS J. VILSACK, Secretary, United
States Department of Agriculture, in his
official capacity; SHALANDA YOUNG,
Director of the United States Office of
Management and Budget, in her official
capacity.

Defendants.

Case No.: 3:23-cv-04678

**DECLARATION OF ERICA PADILLA
CHAVEZ IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFFS' *EX PARTE*
APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY
RESTRAINING ORDER AND ORDER
TO SHOW CAUSE RE: PRELIMINARY
INJUNCTION**

CLASS ACTION

Hearing Date: September 13, 2023
Time: TBD

Action filed: September 12, 2023

DECLARATION OF ERICA PADILLA CHAVEZ

I, **Erica Padilla Chavez**, declare as follows:

1. I have personal knowledge of the facts in this declaration and am competent to testify to them.

2. I am the Chief Executive Officer of Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County. I oversee all operations and resources of the organization.

3. Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County is a non-profit anti-hunger organization. Our mission is to inspire and support Santa Cruz County to provide nourishment for all community members.

4. Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County was the first food bank in California, and the second food bank in the nation. Our organization partners with over 100 community organizations to distribute food throughout the county. We are the only food bank serving our county.

5. Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County provides food to roughly 65,000 Santa Cruz County residents every month and distributes approximately twelve million pounds of food a year.

6. After a recent survey of 52,000 participants, we determined that 16 percent of the people we serve are seniors; 52 percent are adults between the ages of 18 and 64; 20 percent are children between the ages of 6 and 17; and 12 percent of our participants have infants at home. Additionally, 65 percent of our participants are enrolled in Medi-Cal or Medicare, and 20 percent of our participants are enrolled in CalFresh.

7. As the only food bank serving Santa Cruz County, our organization is keenly aware of the food needs of Santa Cruz County. Our demand for food has increased by approximately 20 percent since the pandemic-era Emergency Allotments ended. Additionally, disaster relief efforts following recent floods have led to further increases in demand for food.

8. Our organization recently commissioned a food insecurity report in 2020 through

1 the University of California Santa Cruz' Center for Poverty on Social Enterprise and
2 Participatory Governance. The report found that in our county, the equivalent of more than
3 thirty-million meals were offered in 2020. SNAP program accounted for 42 percent of these
4 meals. Food banks provided 32 percent of these meals, and the remaining meals were provided
5 through WIC and school meal programs. This means that SNAP is the largest program feeding
6 our county.

7 9. If the largest program feeding our community were to stop, our food bank would
8 simply not be able to meet the needs, especially because our food supply was significantly
9 diminished following recent disasters.

10 10. Our organization is actively planning to mitigate as much harm as we can in light
11 of a possible interruption or pause in SNAP benefits. However, we will not be able to meet the
12 needs of all of our residents.

13 11. The additional demand caused by a SNAP shutdown would cause additional
14 strain on our organization's programming, including by potentially causing our organization to
15 no longer be able to offer food delivery services. Food delivery services are essential to meeting
16 the needs of many in our community, but if the SNAP program were to shut down, we would
17 likely need to stop providing this service to focus on food procurement including potentially
18 mass food distributions.

19 12. SNAP is a critical anti-hunger program in Santa Cruz, and an interruption in
20 SNAP benefits would cause tremendous irreparable harm to our residents.

21 I hereby declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of under the laws of the United States of
22 America that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on September 11, 2023, in Santa Cruz
23 County.

24
25
26 Date: September 11, 2023



27 **Erica Padilla Chavez**
28 Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz